

Friendly Fire

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Summary: A little love stirs up between a slightly disillusioned boy and his close friend, or is he as shamefully hopeful as one might think? ONE SHOT

***Chapter 1*: Friendly Fire**

Hey! So, I wanted to try something a little different, so I've tried my hand at a oneshot. I initially began this story with the intentions of finishing it differently, but I thought I'd leave it be. I hope you like it. Thank you, as always, for reading.

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Friendly Fire

There she was. A beauty with a natural talent of the flame, she was his obsession. He sought her out, longing just for the opportunity to "accidentally" touch her hand as they studied alchemy and casting together. She was better than he, though no more patient. Somehow, she was able to channel aptly her fits of frustration into the conception of fire at her fingertips; whenever he grew annoyed, he was only ever successful in acquiring a reddened face and scorching his hair. She, too, had a sharper memory than he, which initially made him envious of her knowledge, but later, amorous. She had long been his friend, and he believed he knew her well enough by now to accurately discern her silly taunts and teases as more than friendly fire but as flirtatious displays of her affection.

Just the other day, during casting practice, she had called him inept at aiming and focusing the correct sum of psynergy, and she had told him he needed "a lot more" practice if he wanted to pass the exam. Clearly, she was looking for a way to spend more time with him. Her infatuation was rather obvious to him, and it boggled his

mind that his best friend did not see it. "You'd be wasting your time with her," he advised. "She doesn't like you like that." But he knew better. He understood the air of her sarcasm, the meaning of her sullen glares, the joking nature of her smirks, and the unmistakable adoration of her frowns.

Finally, after weeks of plucking up the courage, he knew he was ready when she approached him.

"Garet, you never returned my book," she said with a sad frown. "Are you still reading it?"

He laughed lightly, "Well, you know me. It's taking longer than I thought it would to read."

She sighed. The scent lemons on her breath reached his nostrils, and he smiled. He noticed the dust of flour on her dress and in the hair by her ear, where she had brushed back loose strands as she made her lemon pie.

"You read like a snail," she mocked with a smirk. "Take as long as you need," she added with a laugh, "but don't lose it, or I'll pummel you!" A threatening finger she held in Garet's face, her mahogany eyes sharp and sincere. She sure loved her books.

There! That was something he could use. "You sure love your books," he said, a silly grin on his face. She furrowed her brow. His stomach clenched. He began to question his selection of words. In an effort to save himself, he questioned, "Do you love them more than you love me?" As he spoke, he gazed into her eyes and held eye contact.

Goosebumps appeared on her arms, as she was not then expecting him to make such a bold move. That being said, she was also not surprised, for she suspected his growing affection for her. Carefully, she chose her response. "My

books do not threaten me with the chance that, one day, they may be gone from me forever. My love is safer kept with them."

"But they're nothing but paper, and paper burns to ash! My heart will burn forever for the love of you, and the fire will never go out." Perfect. Now, he reached out and grasped her hand, which he brought to his lips. He smiled at his reference to fire, something which was rather unexpected and had fallen together quite naturally. Softly, he kissed the back of her hand.

She blushed. "Garet!"

"What? What is it?" he asked insistently, afraid he had erred.

"This isn't like you at all." She shook her head, her auburn hair swishing behind her as she retracted her hand. "You're more sporadic, impatient, and forceful."

He quickly raised and lowered his eyebrows in a manner that seemed to say "Oh. Well, yeah. Spot on."

"I have been impatient, though. I've been waiting for this moment for weeks!" The young woman put her hands on her hips and tilted her head to the side. The teenage boy murmured, raising his shoulders in protest, "That's a long time for me."

"I've been waiting for months to hear you say something so sweet to me."

He raised his head and looked into her eyes. He thought to ask her to repeat herself but decided not to. Despite how hard he looked, he found no hint of a lie or of mockery in her face. He licked his lips and wetted his dried mouth. He parted his lips but stopped himself from carrying out his

intention to move towards his love. His hands were sweaty. He could not dare touch her with wet hands.

He closed his eyes and focused his mind. Psychic energy flowed through him like water and gathered at his palms, which emanated a pale red glow as he vaporized the sweat. He smiled to himself. After years of painstaking practice, he was able to channel aptly the appropriate amount of energy – enough to heat, but not enough to burn. She would be proud, he thought.

As he was busy smiling to himself, the girl, both proud as he had expected and rash, brought her hands to his face and embraced his lips with her own. Startled, he impulsively took a step back; she moved with him. Having noticed what had come to pass, he allowed his muscles to relax as he draped his arms around her waist and pressed his lips onto hers.

Her hands dropped around the young man's neck, and she pulled his body closer to hers. As she kissed him, she ran her fingers through his coarse, red hair. She moaned a little and pulled her mouth away as she caught her breath, keeping her hands at the back of his neck, her fingers still in his hair. She felt his hands press against her back with his fingers extending and retracting as if to massage her. She smiled up at him.

While she paused to breathe, he took in the sights of her beauty, of her finally being in his arms, and he had to pinch himself, because he could hardly believe it was real. He found it hard to contain his desire for her as she moaned while he kissed her neck, her fingernails scraping along the back of his tunic before she satisfied herself with embracing him.

"Garet?" she breathed over her shoulder as his lips caressed the skin of her neck.

"Yes, Jenna?" he replied, breathing heavily.

"I love you."

"I love you, too. I always have."

Thoughts? Comments? Review! I read them. I appreciate them.

Originally, I was going to make this into a daydream, but I thought, "Nah, Garet deserves a little love, too." And so, I left it. I hope you liked it!

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